

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12
CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
EB-08 /113 W

-----065281 171115Z /10

O 170932Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5173
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 2552

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, SO, KE, ET, EG
SUBJ: PLANE SEIZURES

REF: (A) NAIROBI 2449, (B) NAIROBI 2487, (C) CAIRO 5154
(NOTAL), (D) CAIRO 5198 (NOTAL), (E) STATE 41256 (NOTAL)

1. FEBRUARY 17 INTERNATIONAL NEWS BROADCASTS AND LOCAL MEDIA
REPORT THAT AGREEMENT REACHED TO RELEASE EGYPTIAN AND KENYAN
SEIZED AIRCRAFT. EMBASSY HAS CONFIRMED THAT EGYPTIAN PLANE
WITH CARGO DEPARTED NAIROBI NIGHT FEBRUARY 16.

2. LOCAL PRESS FEBRUARY 17 FEATURES FACT THAT EGYPT HAD
SEIZED TWO KENYAN COMMERCIAL PASSENGER AIRCRAFT, ONE OF
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WHICH WAS "FORCED DOWN." EDITORIALS IN BOTH STANDARD AND
NATION, WHICH GENERALLY REFLECT GOK VIEW, ATTACK EGYPTIAN
SEIZURE AS ACT OF PIRACY AND IN NO WAY LEGITIMACIZED BY KENYAN
SEIZURE WHICH HAD BEEN PROVOKED BY CLEAR ACT OF VIOLATION OF
KENYAN AIR SPACE AND SUPPLY OF ARMS TO KENYA'S "BELLIGERENT
NEIGHBOR." STANDARD EDITORIAL SAYS, "EGYPTIANS, INSTEAD OF
APOLOGISING FOR THEIR INEXCUSABLE BLUNDER WHICH MILITATED

AGAINST EVERY NORM OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, CHOSE TO DEPORT THEM-
SELVES LIKE THOSE PRE-DAWN ARAB EXPLOITERS WHO USED TO LOOK
DOWN UPON THE BLACK MAN AS AN EXPENDABLE COMMODITY."

3. COMMENT - KENYANS ARE UNLIKELY TO FORGET THIS INCIDENT SO
QUICKLY GIVEN FACT THAT THEY HAD EXPLICITLY WARNED EGYPTIAN
AMBASSADOR OF AIR SPACE VIOLATIONS BEFORE THEY TOOK ACTION
TO FORCE DOWN PLANE CARRYING MUNITIONS TO SOMALIA. HOWEVER,
WE WOULD POINT OUT THAT IT APPEARS MOST PROBABLE GOK HAD MADE
DECISION TO RELEASE EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT AND CARGO BEFORE IT HAD
LEARNED OF EGYPTIAN IMPOUNDING OF TWO KENYAN AIRCRAFT. THIS
BASED ON CONVERSATION AMBASSADOR HAD WITH FOREIGN MINISTER
CITED REFTEL B. WE UNDERSTAND FONMIN LEARNED OF EGYPTIAN
ACTS ABOUT 30 MINUTES AFTER CONVERSATION; THUS, KENYAN PROPOSAL
FOR JOINT RELEASE CITED REFTEL D IS CERTAINLY PLAUSIBLE DESPITE
EARLIER INTERNAL DECISION FOR RELEASE. TO US, SUCH UNILATERAL
GOK DECISION IS INDICATION THAT KENYA PREFERS NOT TO COMPOUND
ALREADY COMPLEX AND DANGEROUS SITUATION IN HORN. OF COURSE,
EGYPTIAN SEIZURES OF LEGITIMATE PASSENGER FLIGHTS HAVE
COMPLICATED PICTURE AND HAVE CERTAINLY GIVEN AMPLE REASON TO
GOK IF IT SHOULD DESIRE TO RETALIATE IN FUTURE.

4. WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO SUBSTANTIATE IRANIAN AMBASSADOR'S
REPORT OF INDONESIAN AIRCRAFT HAVING BEEN FORCED DOWN (PARA 4,
REFTEL A), AND SUSPECT IT WAS ERRONEOUS.

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